

# Viaggio

# nei Giardini

# d'Europa

DA LE NÔTRE  
A HENRY JAMES

REGGIA  
DI VENARIA  
Sale delle Arti

05 07 2019  
20 10 2019

Illustrazione di G. B. Piranesi, Veduta di Palazzo Reale, Roma, 1763. In alto: Veduta di Palazzo Reale, Roma, 1763. In basso: Veduta di Palazzo Reale, Roma, 1763.



**La Venaria Reale**

**RESIDENZE  
REALI  
SABAUDE**

European Royal residences



**POLITECNICO  
DI TORINO**  
Dipartimento di  
Architettura e Design



**REGIONE  
PIEMONTE**



**Compartecipazione  
di San Paolo**



**VENARIA REALE - TORINO**  
[residenzereali.it](http://residenzereali.it) [lavenaria.it](http://lavenaria.it)



La Venaria Reale  
2019

---

# A Journey in the Gardens of Europe

From Le Nôtre to Henry James

5 July - 20 October  
Reggia di Venaria - Rooms of the Arts

---



RESIDENZE  
REALI  
SABAUDE

CONSORZIO DELLE RESIDENZE REALI SABAUDE

Ufficio Stampa Istituzionale

Reggia di Venaria - Piazza della Repubblica 4 - 10078 Venaria Reale (Torino) - Italia

tel. +39 011 4992300 - fax +39 011 4598432

press@lavenariareale.it - [www.residenzereali.it](http://www.residenzereali.it) - [www.lavenaria.it](http://www.lavenaria.it)



## *A Journey in the Gardens of Europe*

*From Le Nôtre to Henry James*

5 July - 20 October

Reggia di Venaria - Rooms of the Arts

Architects, landscape designers, princes, writers, intellectuals and scholars travelled across Europe for centuries, visiting gardens, admiring landscapes and drawing inspiration from them. Notebooks, letters and journals, whether published or stowed away in archives allow us to reconstruct itineraries, and journey with our senses to places of beauty, witnessing the continent's histories and cultures.

The **exhibition** unfolds across adventurous storylines, structured into **twelve sections**, in which about **200 works**, including paintings, drawings, wooden models and other objects showcase **famous sixteenth- to early twentieth-century gardens**: from the Italian geometrical settings to the prospective escapes of their French counterparts and the "picturesque" elements of English landscape architectures.

In the context of the Reggia di Venaria and its Gardens, this journey – through the works of both known and less known artists - travels across the Italy of the "Grand Tour" and the Europe of kingdoms and empires, whose gardens of villas and palace function at once as loci of power and "fashionable" phenomenon, summoning distant and dreamed worlds .

The **exhibition was organized and implemented by Consorzio delle Residenze Reali Sabaude**, in partnership with the Polytechnic University of Turin, Department of Architecture and Design (DAD), and Associazione Parchi e Giardini d'Italia (APGI), with the patronage of the Association des Résidences Royales Européennes (ARRE). It is curated by Vincenzo Cazzato, Paolo Cornaglia, Maurizio Reggi and the contribution of Paolo Pejrone; it focuses on garden theme with a **new and original approach**: for the first time, it takes inspiration from the **observations made by travelers** between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries .

The exhibition begins with the **journey of Montaigne** who takes us to Italy's most famous **sixteenth century gardens**, including caves, automatons and creative water displays, while in the **following century André Le Nôtre's** journey offers the opportunity to illustrate the dissemination in Europe of a new way of conceiving large-scale complexes, appreciated by great and small Sun Kings. With the affirmation of the new fashion of the English garden, also promoted by the awareness of Chinese gardens and their forms inspired by nature, **England - together with France and Italy** - attracted architects and gardeners, such as **Swedish Fredrik Magnus Piper and Italian Francesco Bettini**.

The English garden became popular throughout Europe. In France, **Carmontelle** organized the future *Parc Monceau* according to a succession of scenes, proposing an imaginary journey through time and space within the same (from East to West).

At the end of the **eighteenth century**, the travels of aristocrats - the **Count and Countess of the North**, heirs to the throne of Russia, and the **Prince de Ligne** - take us to the major European gardens about which they sometimes unhesitatingly express harsh opinions.



The gardens of the Peninsula are a must stop for the “**Grand Tour**”. Painters like **Hubert Robert and Fragonard** came to Italy to depict the best known gardens in their state of decadence, and the former, upon returning to France, would eventually toy with garden design. “President” **Charles de Brosses** and **Stendhal** crossed the Peninsula from north to south, up to Naples, while on his journey in the sign of his inner rebirth, Goethe went even further, reaching Sicily.

Between the **nineteenth and twentieth centuries**, with two exceptional American travelers, **Henry James and Edith Wharton**, Italy was confirmed as a land of gardens and a source of inspiration for overseas green oases.

The exhibition itinerary ends with a journey into the “system” of the **gardens of the Royal Savoy Residences**, reflecting the different ways of designing nature over the centuries: gardens often visited by the same men - such as André Le Nôtre the Counts of the North - met along the streets of Europe.

---

*Curated by Vincenzo Cazzato, Paolo Cornaglia, Maurizio Reggi and the contribution of Paolo Pejrone.*

*In partnership with the Polytechnic University of Turin-Department of Architecture and Design (DAD) and the Association of Italian Parks and Gardens (Associazione Parchi e Giardini d'Italia, APGI).*

*Under the patronage of ARRE, Association des Résidences Royales Européennes.*

---



## Sections of the exhibition

### Overture

---

Before embarking on a journey in the “royal” gardens, the exhibition showcases “ideal” gardens in different arts and with different meanings: a set of tapestries celebrating Pomona, the Goddess of Orchards and Gardens, three-dimensional model of the sixteenth-century Medici garden halfway between reality and fiction (displayed on the occasion of the “Italian Garden Exhibition” of 1931), some eighteenth-century theater sets and a “fantasy” Roman garden. All “ideal” gardens as a “reflection” of the royal garden.

The garden model and the “optical views” of the Cinema Museum embody the relationship between Garden and Theater, interchangeable structures since, on the one hand, “the garden enters the theater” through sets and, on the other, “the theater enters the garden” with scenes that reflect a successful Vitruvian triad: *tragic scene, comic scene and satiric scene*.

### MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE

#### Fountains, caves and automatons in sixteenth-century Italy

---

Precursor of that “Grand Tour” which will become recurring fashion a century and a half later, Montaigne was convinced that traveling was a useful exercise. In his *Journal du voyage*, he paid particular attention to gardens, not so much to general layouts and plants, but to the inventions through which nature submits itself to the artifice. At the center of his interests are caves, fountains, water displays, music and sounds, automatons activated by water power through complex mechanisms and documented in Heinrich Schickhardt’s drawings.

He visited the Medici villas more than once: he was three times in Castello, twice in Pratolino while the gigantic *Apennines* were still under construction. No mention for the Boboli gardens; in Poggio a Caiano, his focus was on the duke’s distillation cabinet.

The Medici gardens are the core element of comparison with other gardens, starting from the gardens of Villa d’Este in Tivoli, famous for the water music that marries hydraulic organs.

Between the two poles of Rome - where villas come to terms with the remains of classical antiquity, as emerges from the paintings of van Cleve and Wrancx - and of Tuscany lie the gardens of Tuscia: the Farnese villa in Caprarola and, above all, the villa of Cardinal Gambara in Bagnaia, so rich in fountains - as documented by Giovanni Guerra’s drawings - to overtake Tivoli and Pratolino.



## ANDRÉ LE NÔTRE

### Journey to Italy and the popularity of the French model in Europe

---

The “French-style” garden progressively acquires its own physiognomy during the seventeenth century, until it became a winning formula welcomed in every part of Europe as an effective image of Power.

A new way of designing space was born through the hybridization of the Italian garden with French culture, society and land. The process of affirmation of a model and its dissemination in Europe reached its zenith with André Le Nôtre: creator of the gardens of absolute power, he designed large-scale spaces, making the garden expand within the design of the territory. Le Nôtre’s travel to Italy was controversial and information about it is scant: he arrived in Genoa from Marseille in June, then continuing to Tuscany and Rome. On his way back to France, he made stops in Turin and Pinerolo, the latter being at that time part of the French territory: in the fortress, he visited Fouquet prisoner. Anecdotaly, during his travels across Italy, Le Nôtre did some work in Tuscany and Rome. He allegedly visited the Peninsula’s major Renaissance and Baroque gardens (including Colorno before their great transformations), though he reportedly was not too impressed about them.

Le Nôtre, who was also active at other European courts by designing numerous projects (as in the case of Racconigi), left no theoretical or practical writings: the fortune of the French garden in Europe - from England, to Germany and Russia - is due to treatise by Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d’Argenville, published in 1709, and the proliferation of collaborators and students of Le Nôtre and of French-trained gardeners. It is a fortune that would last until the eighteenth century, as shown by the extreme case of Caserta.

## HUBERT ROBERT E FRAGONARD

### The “Grand Tour” of painters

---

#### Hubert Robert

If aristocrats travelled to satisfy their curiosity, painters traveled to perfect themselves - especially in Rome - in their trade. Painter and creator of gardens, Robert casually passed from landscapes on canvas to those recreated in nature. His fortune began in Rome, where he spent eleven years (from 1754 to 1765) attending the French Academy also as a “pensionnaire” and coming into contact with artists such as Fragonard, Pannini and Piranesi. The memory of the ancient ruins of the gardens of Rome and their surroundings would influence his productions as painter-gardener.

In 1760, he traveled to Naples accompanied by Abbot Saint-Non. In 1761, he went to Villa Aldobrandini, in Frascati; he accompanied Caprarola Saint-Non and Fragonard, eventually making another journey there three years later. In the summer of 1762, he was at Villa d’Este, in 1763 in Florence. Upon returning to France, he was admitted to the “Académie Royale de peinture et sculpture” (1766) as “peintre d’architecture”. In 1776, he was commissioned by King Louis XVI to document the conditions of the park of Versailles at the time trees were cut down; this moment marked his official debut into the world of gardens. He designed the new arrangement of the Apollo Baths at Versailles and collaborated with various architects in the creation of the gardens of the Petit Trianon and Rambouillet, eventually becoming “dessinateur des jardins du roi” in 1784. The parks of Méréville and Ermenonville are other significant picturesque creations of his .



### Jean-Honoré Fragonard

Follower of a Rococo current, influenced by Boucher for his search for sensuality and eroticism, and by Watteau for the theme of “gallant parties”, Fragonard also drew inspiration from Italian baroque painting.

Winner in 1752 of the “Grand Prix” of the “Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture”, in 1756, he left for Rome and by virtue of his friendship with Robert, a few years his junior, he devoted himself to landscape design; both men were fascinated by ruins and Renaissance villas.

We do not know when Fragonard met Abbot Saint-Non, but the two were at Villa d'Este in the summer of 1760: the attention is entirely turned to the gardens and the profusion of vegetation that translates into a celebration of the majestic cypress trees. At the end of their Roman stay, which lasted over four years, Fragonard went to Naples in March 1761. After returning with him to Paris, he designed the Farnese palace in Caprarola, the Pitti palace in Florence, the Rotonda of Vicenza, and Genoese palaces and gardens.

He returned to Italy between 1773 and 1774, accompanied by his wife and wealthy financier Bergeret. The traveling group made stops in Rome, Naples, Frascati and the Alban Hills; upon their return, they embarked on a grand tour of the major European cities: Vienna, Prague, Dresden, Frankfurt and Strasbourg.

## EUROPE TO CHINA, CHINA TO EUROPE

### The discovery and fortune of the Celestial Empire

---

Emperor Qianlong, sixth emperor of the Qing dynasty, was a great art collector and garden lover. In 1747, he decided to add an “exotic” section to his former Summer Palace (*Yuanming Yuan*), the great imperial park just outside Beijing, and commissioned a group of Jesuit missionaries, employed at his court in a variety of different roles, to carry out a series of “Western-style” gardens and architectural motifs. The operation was entrusted to Italian Jesuit Giuseppe Castiglione, a prolific painter who served at the Qing court under three successive emperors. To please the sovereigns, Castiglione eventually adapted his pictorial style to Chinese canons. For these gardens, however, he drew heavily from the Italian and French tradition, enriching gardens with an elaborate apparatus of fountains and creative water displays.

In the meantime, an inordinate passion for China, its culture and its artefacts had taken root in Europe for some time. In addition to paper screens, vases and wallpaper, Europe received from China suggestions for interior fittings and tapestries and, above all, ideas for the creation of new gardens that were far from traditional Western canons. It was the copious travel reports of missionaries and travelers, at the time real “best-sellers”, that introduced to Europe Chinese gardens and their forms inspired by nature, which played an important role in the evolution of European gardens and in the formation of the aesthetics of *Anglo-Chinois jardins*, of which William Chambers, creator of the gardens of Kew and its famous pagoda, was an unwitting purveyor.

### Giuseppe Castiglione

In 1707, Castiglione entered the Genoa novitiate from where, thanks to his skill as a painter, was assigned to the *Chinese provinces*. Transferred to Coimbra in 1709, he embarked in Lisbon in 1714, eventually reaching Beijing the following year. Accredited at the Chinese court, he taught Chinese painting techniques; in 1723, Castiglione painted numerous symbols of good luck, followed by the famous scroll of the *Hundred Horses*. From 1735, date of the ascension to the imperial throne of Emperor Qianlong, Castiglione coordinated the construction of the European Pavilions in the gardens of the ancient Summer Palace (*Yuanming Yuan*) in Beijing.



### **William Chambers**

Born to a Scottish merchant who settled in Sweden, British architect William Chambers joined the Swedish Company, traveling with it to India and China: between 1740 and 1742, he was in Bengal; on two different occasions, between 1743-44 and 1748-49, he went to Guangzhou (Canton). Information on Chinese architecture and gardens collected during these two trips, albeit brief, provided him with useful material for the publication of some successful writings on the subject, which he published several years after his return from China.

### **FRANCESCO BETTINI AND FREDRIK MAGNUS PIPER**

#### **Gardeners and architects traveling through Europe between the 18th and 19th century**

---

#### **Francesco Bettini**

Amateur gardener - but also hairdresser and table decorator, party organizer, playwright and music teacher - Bettini owes its training to his repeated trips to France and England, which allowed him to introduce the "English" garden to Rome. First at the service of Count Giovanni Mocenigo, Ambassador of the Venetian Republic in Paris, then of Lord Lucan in London, and again in Paris with Apostolic Nuncio Giuseppe Doria Pamphilj, Bettini visited and appreciated the new gardens that were becoming popular beyond the Alps, coming into contact with personalities like Antoine Richard, gardener of Versailles, and dedicating himself to designing "fashionable" gardens.

He worked with Georges-Louis on the monumental work on the Anglo-Chinese gardens. The invention of gardens is accompanied to the study and dissemination of innovative agronomic techniques he had the opportunity to experience upon returning to Rome, at the service of Cardinal Doria, in the "Villetta" (or "Orti di Raffaello", an area now part of Villa Borghese), and, after the Villa's destruction following French occupation of 1797, in the villa outside Porta San Pancrazio, owned by Prince Doria Pamphilj, brother of his "patron".

#### **Fredrik Magnus Piper**

Architect and landscape architect, expert in hydraulics and horticulture, he was the largest interpreter of the "English-style" garden in Sweden. He trained in Mathematics and Hydrostatics at the University of Uppsala, then in the newly established Stockholm architecture school, under the guidance of Carl Fredrik Adelcrantz, the protagonist of the artistic renewal promoted by King Gustav III.

In April 1773, he left Sweden for a long trip to England, France and Italy. In London, he worked with William Chambers, as well as studied and mastered the creative innovations of the landscape garden.

From 1774, he continued travelling across Europe, devoting himself to the study of the French gardens of Le Nôtre and of the Italian Renaissance and Baroque villas, stopping for about three years in Rome - from 1776 to 1778 - where he reproduced in renditions of extraordinary graphic quality the best known gardens of the Lazio region.

On his way back to Sweden, he stopped again in France, then to England, where he made drawings of the most important naturalistic gardens - from Kew to Stourhead and to Painshill.

The English experience influenced the drafting of ideal projects after he returned to Sweden in 1780, where he busied himself updating royal estates, from Drottningholm to Haga, and in the modernization of a number of public and private gardens according to "English" garden canon, about which he would write, without publishing it, a theoretical treatise (1811-12).





## CARMONTELLE

### The “Folie de Chartres”. Journey into the garden of illusions

---

#### Louis Carrogis, a.k.a. Carmontelle

A talented handyman, self-taught, dramatic author, set designer, costume designer, party organizer, painter and engraver, art critic and garden creator, Louis Carrogis, known as Carmontelle, is a representative of mid-eighteenth century mundane and gallant culture. Though he studied drawing and geometry and acquired the title of engineer and topographer engineer, his skills were best displayed in caricature drawing and writing of farces and stories. For the duke Louis-Philippe d'Orléans, lover of all theatrical forms, he invented a new genre based on improvisation, that of *proverbes*, small comedies with light plots.

In 1773, Carmontelle was commissioned to expand one of the most famous “picturesque” gardens, the future Parc Monceau, owned by the Duke of Chartres. Breaking away from contemporary English models, he created “pays d'illusion”, a series of 17 scenes created between 1773 and 1778 and proposed in his work *Jardin de Monceau* (1779).

The garden imitates theater and theater imitates garden. “Réunir dans un seul jardin tous les temps et tous les lieux” is Carmontelle’s primary objective, which identifies the garden as a place of illusion: “Transportons dans nos jardins les changements de scène des Opéras”.

Another invention of Carmontelle is the so-called “transparent”, an attempt to introduce animation in painting. Stretched between two reels, the tableaux are scrolls painted on Chinese paper that could be as short as 50 cm and as tall as a few tens of meters, and moved synchronously by cranks: a sort of magic lantern, a forerunner of cinematic experiences. The tableaux presented images of more or less imaginary gardens that give us the feeling of experiencing something that is physically real walking through a garden. Another one of his other favorite pastimes was to sketch with pen and watercolor the profile portrait people he met. More than seeking a close resemblance in somatic traits, his intent was to bring out the character of the person: he produced a repertoire of over seven hundred characters of all ages and from all walks of life.



## THE PRINCE DE LIGNE AND THE COUNT AND COUNTESS OF THE NORTH

### Aristocrats to the discovery of new gardens

---

#### Charles Joseph Lamoral, Prince de Ligne

A leading exponent of the late eighteenth-century aristocracy and culture, Prince de Ligne joined the Austrian army in 1752 and had a significant military career. He traveled throughout Europe, met Voltaire, Rousseau, Casanova, Talleyrand, Marie Antoinette and Catherine of Russia, eventually becoming counselor to Joseph II of Habsburg. He died in 1814, at the time of the Congress of Vienna, a city where he had resided since 1793. He left a huge collection of memoirs about aristocracy and Europe before the French Revolution (*Mélanges militaires, littéraires et sentimentales*).

Prince de Ligne loved gardens, especially his own, which he had built with great care at Beloeil, following the new fashion that shunned the geometries and artificiality of traditional French and Italian gardens, in favor of a more unbound and natural design inspired by landscape painting. In his *Coup d'oeil sur Beloeil*, published in several editions beginning in 1781, he described his own garden as well as a multitude of European gardens belonging to aristocrats and especially to royal courts, from Great Britain to Russia. His work was not a travel diary in the true sense of the word, but a report on places he visited during his life in the military, as well as of sentimental meetings and visits to court. His judgments are unquestionable with regard to the old way of understanding gardens (villa Pisani in Strà, the royal palace of Colorno and the Kassel waterfalls), but also about the new projects, which in his view, are less successful (Chiswick and Bellevue). In Paris, he was moved to tears by Moulin Joli, lashed out at Versailles and fell in love the garden of the Petit Trianon wanted by Marie Antoinette. In Vienna, he considered the garden of Neuwaldegg to be perfect. His travels took him to Poland - where he appreciated łązienki and probably visited Wilanów, bearing witness to the Bellotto complex - and to Russia. He praised Pavlovsk, the estate of the Counts of the North, near St. Petersburg, for the ability of its designers to enter into harmony with the surrounding nature, enhancing it.

#### Paolo Petrovič Romanov and Sofia Dorotea of Württemberg

In the winter of 1781, Paul and Maria Fiodorovna, heirs to the throne of Russia, left St. Petersburg. They traveled incognito, under the name of the **Count and Countess of the North**, to avoid etiquette and official receptions. Their choice reflected their desire for freedom, which is also mirrored in the design of their palace garden. The couple traveled through Europe, visiting capitals, courts and gardens. We know where they stopped and their impressions through the publications of the time and the diary of Maria Fiodorovna's lady-in-waiting.

The couple's travels winded through Poland, Austria, Italy, France, The Netherlands and Germany. In Monza, they admired the garden designed by Piermarini; in Turin, they reached agreements with court artists, with the Countess requiring copies of their drawings and projects. In Paris, they visited the most modern private houses, such as the Hôtel Thélusson, as well as the Trianon, in whose "delicious" gardens a party was held in their honor. In Chantilly, they admired the fake peasant village in the English garden, asking for copies of its drawings; in Chanteloup, they saw the garden complex only from a distance. In Ostend, they met Prince de Ligne; in Germany, in Schwetzingen, they visited the famous gardens ("the most fascinating in the world") and in Hohenheim, the "English village". Everything becomes a source of inspiration for their residence in Pavlovsk, a Neoclassical villa set in a picturesque garden, near St. Petersburg, where they returned in 1782.



## CHARLES DE BROSSES

### The “Grand Tour” of a curious President

---

In the *Lettres familières* anecdotes, observations, descriptions and portraits accompany valuable reflections on Italian gardens, often compared to their French counterparts: “we are as much superior to them when it comes to gardens, as they are to us when it comes to buildings”. He took note of the former’s poor maintenance and, at times, their state of abandonment. In Genoa, he noticed they were mainly hanging and how those in the suburbs featured caves and fountains. He was particularly surprised by the spectacle of the terraces of Isola Bella, on Lake Maggiore. He got lost in the maize of the Giusti garden in Verona, which featured incredibly tall cypresses. Before embarking on navigation along the Brenta river, whose shores are enhanced by the gardens of the Venetian nobility, he visited the Botanical Garden of Padua, which he also recommended to those who were already familiar with the Paris gardens. In Lucca, he enjoyed walking along the walls, where the view extended over a countryside in the form of a garden. In his view, the Boboli garden had a rural flair. In Rome, his favorite places were Villa Borghese and, above all, Villa Pamphilj, along with Villa Ludovisi and Villa Montalto. In Frascati - immortalized in the drawings of Gaspar van Wittel and famous for the triad of the Aldobrandini, Mondragone and Conti (Torlonia) villas - his main delight was to stroll in the gardens, having fun with water jets in a saraband of childish pranks and games.

## GOETHE

### Travel as re-birth

---

Italy, the country of places dreamed of since childhood and filtered through his father’s stories is for Goethe an Edenic place. Even before crossing its borders, he provided an idealized image in the first stanza of Mignon’s song: “Do you know the country where lemons bloom?”. He admired the landscapes of the Adige valley, the shores of Lake Garda, visited the Giusti garden in Verona; in the Botanical Garden of Padua, he realized that all plant forms have developed from a single plant. In Rome, a city that had for him an irresistible attraction, he found the expression of the synthesis between Art and Nature, between past and present: “I look at the ruins, the buildings, I visit this and that villa....”. Long walks in the Roman countryside brought out a passion for drawing. In Naples and Sicily, where the journey was tinged with Homeric connotations, the scenario of lights and colors accentuated his interest in chromatic perceptions. In Palermo, in Villa Giulia, the idea of the “archetypal plant” took further shape.

The translation into sketches of Goethe’s reflections on trees, villas, and landscapes - in a close relationship between word and image - is also enhanced by the occasional presence of a group of painters including Wilhelm Tischbein (the author of the famous painting *Goethe in the Roman Campagna*), Angelika Kaufmann, Albert Christoph Dies, Jacob Philipp Hackert, landscape architect at the Bourbon court, and Christoph Heinrich Knip, who accompanied him to Sicily.





## STENDHAL

### Travel as a source of happiness

---

«I travel not to learn about Italy, but for my pleasure»: it is the phrase that summarizes the Stendhalian idea of travel. Stendhal - who visited Italy several times in search of the most famous places on the "Grand Tour" - described cities, landscapes and gardens with short but intense strokes. Among the achievements of the French administration, he particularly admired the Arena of Milan ("the Circus"), the gardens of the Montagnola in Bologna and the Pincio in Rome.

Love for Milan, which he considered his adoptive city, to the extent that he had "Arrigo Beyle Milanese" carved on his tomb stone, also extended to the Milan outskirts (Castellazzo, Villa Litta in Lainate and Villa Cusani Traversi in Desio), and the "beautiful Lombardy" of the lakes, especially Lake Como, on whose waters villa d'Este, Pliniana, Balbianello and Villa Sommariva (villa Carlotta) are reflected.

Stendhal considered the gardens of Rome privileged lookouts over the city. A special appreciation is reserved for Villa Borghese, but, above all, for Villa Ludovisi, "one of the most beautiful things in the world". Of the villas on the outskirts of Rome (Ville tuscolane) - villa Aldobrandini villa in the first place, object of attention by many painters, from Granet to Boguet - Stendhal emphasized the perfect symbiosis between architecture and nature, and unhesitatingly affirmed that "the most beautiful the wood of the world is that of the Ariccia"; more than on the individual gardens, he focused on the landscape, as emerges also from his vast pictorial production of those years. He was greatly disappointed about the Royal Palace of Caserta, "a military barrack in an ungrateful position, like that of Versailles ».

## HENRY JAMES

### An American in Europe in search of the "spirit of the place"

---

England, France and Italy represent Europe for James, but it is above all Italy that enchanted James, who visited the country 14 times, identifying with its beauty, art and tradition. His attention to the landscape and the gardens emerges from the collection of essays *Italian Hours* (1909).

The legs of his journey are the traditional ones of the "Grand Tour", but the gardens he admired most were those of Venice which, hidden from view, were reflected and seemingly liquefied in the canals. In Florence, if the Boboli garden embodied the spirit of the place, it is the surrounding villas - mostly inhabited by a sizeable Anglo-Florentine contingent - that exerted strong attraction. The emotion aroused by the great Roman villas - such as Borghese and Medici villas - became more intense in Villa Ludovisi, which James visited before its destruction. The state of abandonment of the villas triggered in James a quasi desired melancholy. He described poignant places like the non-Catholic cemetery of the Pyramid of Cestius. In Tivoli, the sublime atmosphere of the Aniene waterfalls was met by the decadence of Villa d'Este, with its waters and dark cypresses, a striking vision that also enchanted the great German artist Oswald Achenbach, a contemporary of James's.

**Edith Wharton** was a dear friend of Henry James, and one of the greatest interpreters of the New York bourgeoisie between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Since childhood, she too traveled from America to Europe (to the point that Henry James nicknamed her "Lady Pendulum"). Her travel experiences and her passion for landscapes and gardens - especially little-known ones, off the beaten path - were transferred into the publication *Italian Villas and their Gardens* (1904), which will decisively contribute to the fortune of Italian garden overseas .



## THE GARDENS OF THE SAVOY ROYAL RESIDENCES

### A journey through time

---

#### On the saddle between seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: from André Le Nôtre to Michel Benard

The vicissitudes of the gardens of the Savoy court residences are inextricably linked to the circuit of villas and palaces built since at the end of the sixteenth century around the capital Turin. Emanuele Filiberto conceived a ring around the city, consisting of buildings, parks and hunting grounds that were to take shape over time, eventually becoming what Amedeo di Castellamonte happily described as a “crown of delights”, and which would continue to be enhanced until the twentieth century.

The series of views attributed to Giovanni Battista Abret documents the seventeenth-century phase, during which the architectural layout, still in Italian style, was combined with the French-style parterres designed - on the basis of the treatises of the period - by gardeners from beyond the Alps, like Jacques Gélén and Alexandre Bélér. Thereafter, gardens were directly designed by André Le Nôtre (Racconigi Castle, 1670; Palazzo Reale in Turin, 1697), while others - as in the case of Venaria - are indebted to his collaborator, “Monsieur” de Marne, and Henri Duparc, Intendant of the gardens of Vittorio Amedeo II. The triumph of the French model was enshrined by the work of Michel Benard, Director of the Royal Gardens, who was specifically called from Paris, in 1739, author of the complexes of Agliè, Moncalieri and Stupinigi; the latter, with its building, was destined to become the “visiting card” of the court in Europe.

With the end of the eighteenth century, taste began to change and with it, the destiny of gardens: picturesque elements landed at Racconigi with the works of Giacomo Pregliasco (1787), while in the Napoleonic era the renewal of the Royal Garden, now called Imperiale, proceeded alongside with the complete abandonment of Venaria Reale.

#### Venaria Reale: from the Baroque to the contemporary garden

The construction site of Venaria Reale opened in 1659, by orders of Carlo Emanuele II, and conceived by engineer Amedeo di Castellamonte as a large system consisting of village, palace, services and gardens. The latter, completed around 1675, were the perfect compendium of all Italian garden canons built between the 16th and 17th centuries: terraces, architectural backdrops, staircases, ramps, fountains, caves and about 400 sculpture works. At the end of the seventeenth century, however, everything seemed antiquated and small-scale to Duke Vittorio Amedeo II: like the palace, the garden would also be redesigned according to French taste, and blueprints by Antoine de Marne and Henri Duparc, which effectively destroyed the existing structures and fountains, dispersing the existing sculptures and designing a new, huge park set on a central axis almost three kilometers long. In turn, this garden would disappear during the Napoleonic occupation, replaced by cultivated land.

The restoration project of the complex, promoted by the European Union and managed by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and by the Piedmont Region, represented one of the largest construction sites in Europe (1999 - 2006).

The new gardens of Venaria reinforce the identity traits of the location, re-proposing proportions, perspectives, and axes identified as founding elements of the original design, and recovering the relationship with the surrounding landscape. They present themselves as a close union between ancient and modern, a virtuous dialogue between archaeological traces and contemporary works. In the framework of the gardens of Italian courts, those of Venaria are notable for the breadth of perspectives and the vastness of the natural landscape, consisting of the woods of Parco la Mandria and the Alpine range.



### **A table for Napoleon with the imperial gardens of Piedmont**

During the Napoleonic era (1798-1814), the system of residences of the Savoy court was re-considered, elevating to the rank of Imperial Houses those that were deemed most attractive (the Royal Palace and the Villa della Regina in Turin, the hunting lodge of Stupinigi and Racconigi castle) and converting those that were too damaged or costly into military or hospital buildings: the castles of Moncalieri, Agliè, Rivoli, Venaria Reale and Valentino in Turin.

The series of *gouaches* made by Luigi Baldassarre Reviglio (news 1809-1832), sent to Sèvres in 1811 for the realization of a table designed for the Napoleonic imperial court, decorated with circles - as tradition called for at that time - which overlooked the French castles, to which Stupinigi, Quirinale and Laeken were to be added, were not immediately affected by changes in the making. The views concern not only the Stupinigi Hunting Lodge - as requested - but also the Valentino castle and the Villa della Regina in Turin, the castles of Moncalieri, Racconigi and Rivoli, and Reggia di Venaria. In some cases, the gardens were portrayed with inventive freedom, but, in general, the rounds offer us the last "snapshot" of complexes that suffered severe damage in the Napoleonic years, until their complete disappearance, as in the case of the gardens of Venaria Reale. The piece of furniture (today at the Getty Museum in Malibu) was never made, because it was completed after the fall of Napoleon with French castles only, and donated to the Neapolitan court, but nine preparatory *gouaches* remain in the Sèvres archives. The rounds were exhibited for the first time in the context of the residences which they portray.

### **Between the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries: from Xavier Kurten to the Roda brothers**

German-born landscape designer but of French culture, Xavier Kurten arrived in Piedmont during the Napoleonic occupation, working at Villa della Regina and the Royal Palace. The times by this time requires gardens that mimic nature and blend into it. With the Restoration, Kurten was hired by the princes of Carignano, for whom he redesigned the Racconigi Park (1820) in landscape forms, later devoting himself to the enlargement of the Govone Park (1819), to the complete refurbishing of the Agliè Park (1829) and to the creation of many "English" parks for the Piedmont nobility. Kurten's work was to be continued at Racconigi by Giuseppe and Marcellino Roda, sent by King Carlo Alberto around Europe between 1840 and 1843 to familiarize themselves with how to design and manage courtly gardens. Numerous views testify to these transformations that erase the system defined in the previous century. However, the garden of the Royal Palace of Turin was not modified, as its formal features were very much admired at the beginning of the twentieth century. This garden, along with those of Villa della Regina and of Stupinigi and the large parks of Racconigi, Agliè and Moncalieri are today a precious legacy in the context of the landscape assets of the Piedmont Region, which, along with their residences, have been added to the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 1998.





## MAIN WORKS ON DISPLAY

### Overture

---



Enrico Lusini, Architect; Donatello Bianchini, Set Designer

*Il giardino fiorentino del Cinquecento/Sixteenth-century Florentine gardens* (Displayed for the "Italian Garden Exhibition", 1931)

multi-material model

Firenze, Villa Medicea della Petraia - Polo Museale della Toscana



Brussels Production (late 16th – start of 17th centuries)

*Raccolta di fiori e frutti votivi per la dea Pomona/Harvesting Votive Flowers and Fruits for Goddess Pomona*  
tapestry

Genova, Musei di Strada Nuova

CONSORZIO DELLE RESIDENZE REALI SABAUDE

Ufficio Stampa Istituzionale

Reggia di Venaria - Piazza della Repubblica 4 - 10078 Venaria Reale (Torino) - Italia

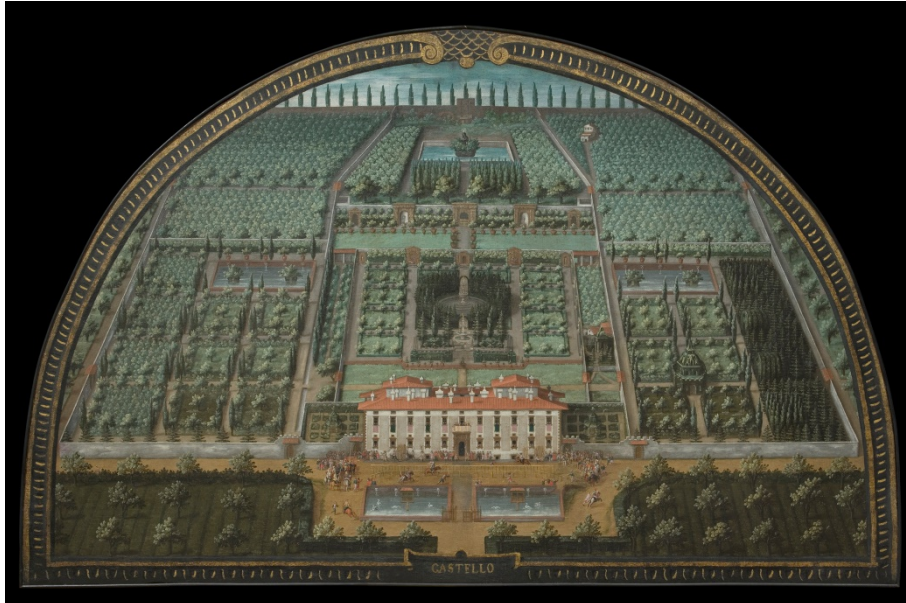
tel. +39 011 4992300 - fax +39 011 4598432

press@lavenariareale.it - www.residenzereali.it - www.lavenaria.it



**WITH MONTAIGNE IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY ITALY:  
ON THE TRACES OF HISTORY AND THE WONDERS OF CAVES AND AUTOMATONS**

---



Giusto Utens

*Veduta della Villa medicea di Castello/View of Medici Villa of Castello* ca 1599-1602

fat-over-lean on canvas

Firenze, Villa Medicea della Petraia - Polo Museale della Toscana



Hendrick van Cleef III

*Veduta del giardino Cesi in Borgo/View of the Cesi Garden in Borgo*, 1584

oil on table

Praga, Galleria Nazionale (Národní Galerie)

CONSORZIO DELLE RESIDENZE REALI SABAUDE

Ufficio Stampa Istituzionale

Reggia di Venaria - Piazza della Repubblica 4 - 10078 Venaria Reale (Torino) - Italia

tel. +39 011 4992300 - fax +39 011 4598432

press@lavenariareale.it - www.residenzereali.it - www.lavenaria.it





**CONTROVERSIAL JOURNEY AND UNDISPUTED REALITY:  
LE NÔTRES IN ITALY AND THE AFFIRMATION OF THE FRENCH GARDEN IN EUROPE**

---



Étienne Allegrain

*Veduta della Reggia di Versailles e dell'Orangerie presa dal bacino degli Svizzeri/View of Palace of Versailles and the Orangery from the Swiss Basin, ca 1695*

oil on canvas

Versailles, Musée National du Château de Versailles





THE “GRAND TOUR” OF PAINTERS:  
HUBERT ROBERT AND JEAN-HONORÉ FRAGONARD

---



Hubert Robert

*Il grande getto d'acqua della Villa Conti (Torlonia) a Frascati/The Great Water Jet of Villa Conti (Torlonia) in Frascati, 1761*

oil on canvas

Besançon, Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie



## DISCOVERING THE CELESTIAL EMPIRE

---



Pierre Marie Gabriel Bouret  
*La pagoda di Chanteloup/The Chanteloup Pagoda*, 1844  
oil on canvas  
Tours, Musée des Beaux Arts



Vienna, Du Paquier Production  
*Orologio con draghi, figure di cinesi, pagode e uccelli/Clock with Dragons, Chinese figures and Birds*, 1725  
porcelain  
Torino, Palazzo Madama – Museo Civico d'Arte Antica



## GARDENERS AND ARCHITECTS TRAVELING THROUGH EUROPE BETWEEN THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES

---



Fredrick Magnus Piper

*La cascata di Villa Conti Torlonia a Frascati/The Villa Torlonia Waterfall in Frascati*

pen and watercolor on paper

Stoccolma, The Royal Academy of Fine Arts

## EUROPEAN TRAVELS OF PRINCES AND ARISTOCRATS

---



George Lambert

*Veduta della villa di Chiswick dalla cascata/View of Chiswick Villa from the Waterfall, 1742*

oil on canvas

Londra, English Heritage, Chiswick House

CONSORZIO DELLE RESIDENZE REALI SABAUDE

Ufficio Stampa Istituzionale

Reggia di Venaria - Piazza della Repubblica 4 - 10078 Venaria Reale (Torino) - Italia

tel. +39 011 4992300 - fax +39 011 4598432

press@lavenariareale.it - www.residenzereali.it - www.lavenaria.it





Bernardo Bellotto  
*Veduta dei giardini di Wilanów/View of the Wilanów Gardens, 1777*  
oil on canvas  
Varsavia, The Royal Castle – Museum



Jan Van Nickelen  
*Veduta del giardino di sotto del Karlsberg/View of the Garden below Karlsberg, 1716 - 1721*  
oil on canvas  
Kassel, Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister



## THE “GRAND TOUR” OF AN INTELLECTUAL: CHARLES DE BROSSES



Antonio Joli  
*Isola Bella*, ca 1756-60  
oil on canvas  
Stresa, Isola Bella, Collezioni Borromeo



Gaspar van Wittel  
*Veduta di villa Medici/View of Villa Medici*, 1685  
tempera on parchment  
Firenze, Gallerie degli Uffizi – Galleria Palatina





## GOETHE'S "GRAND TOUR": TRAVEL AS RE-BIRTH

---



Peter Birmann

*Cipressi a Villa d'Este a Tivoli/Cypresses in Villa d'Este in Tivoli, ca 1789*

pen and brown brush on pencil on paper

Roma, Casa di Goethe



Jacob Phillip Hackert

*Veduta del Giardino Inglese di Caserta/View of the English Garden of Caserta, 1792*

gouache

Caserta, Reggia

CONSORZIO DELLE RESIDENZE REALI SABAUDE

Ufficio Stampa Istituzionale

Reggia di Venaria - Piazza della Repubblica 4 - 10078 Venaria Reale (Torino) - Italia

tel. +39 011 4992300 - fax +39 011 4598432

press@lavenariareale.it - www.residenzereali.it - www.lavenaria.it



## STENDHAL'S "GRAND TOUR" AND TRAVEL AS A SOURCE OF HAPPINESS

---



Nicolas-Didier Boguet

*La loggia superiore di Villa Aldobrandini a Frascati/The Upper Loggia of Villa Aldobrandini in Frascati, 1824*  
oil on canvas

Aix-en-Provence, Musée Granet





**DUE TWO AMERICANS IN EUROPE:  
HENRY JAMES, EDITH WHARTON AND THE ITALIAN GARDEN BETWEEN THE NINETEENTH  
AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES**

---



John Singer Sargent

*A Torregalli: signora in giardino/In Torregalli: A Gentleman in the Garden, 1910*

oil on canvas

London, Royal Academy of Arts



Oswald Achenbach

*Veduta di villa d'Este a Tivoli / View of Villa d'Este in Tivoli, 1892*

oil on canvas

Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts (Szépművészeti Múzeum)



## THE SAVOY ROYAL RESIDENCES SYSTEM: HERITAGE WITH A EUROPEAN DIMENSION

---



Luigi Baldassarre Reviglio (active in Piedmont between 1809 and 1835)

*“Vue du Château (ci-devant Royal) de la Vénérie, sis à deux petites lieues de la ville de Turin, prise du fond du Jardin par Louis Reviglio”, 1811*

tempera on paper

Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique - Sèvres et Limoges



## CURIOSITIES FROM TRAVEL DIARIES: COMMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND HARSH COMMENTS

---

In the last decades of the eighteenth century, new sensitivities and tastes emerge in Europe with respect to garden projects, at this juncture oriented towards nature, emotions, scene sets and theater. This new attitude is witnessed by the cosmopolitan aristocrats who traveled across the continent following the itineraries of the "Grand Tour", or with the aim of refreshing the artistic and architectural field, like Prince De Ligne, the drive behind the transformation of the landscape of his Beloeil Park, great connoisseur of European gardens and great proponent of the picturesque theme; the so-called Count and Countess of the North, the name used by the heirs to the throne of Russia, Paolo and Maria Fiodorovna, engaged in a long European tour in 1782, and Ferdinand of Habsburg, who, in the same years, visited European courts and location accompanied by Ercole Silva, promoter of the dissemination of the new taste in Italy.

These illustrious travelers left us interesting pages with detailed descriptions and significant opinions on the many gardens they visited, true reviews that often - alongside praises and commendations - do not hide sharp opinions and criticisms reflective of a passionate debate across different genres.

Here is a sample of quotations taken from the various authors presented in the exhibition:

*«Traveling seems to me a useful exercise.  
The soul practices continuously by noticing new and unknown things»  
(Montaigne)*

*«To those who ask me the reason for my travels, I usually reply that I am aware of what I am leaving behind,  
but not what I'm looking for»  
(Montaigne)*

*«Le Notre's journey to Italy in 1678 was of little use to him. The view of the gardens of Tivoli, Frascati,  
Colorno, Sassuolo and Pratolino mildly warmed the imagination of this great man [...] with the exception of Venaria Reale, which belongs to the King of Sardinia,  
designed by a French architect in the style of Marly's gardens»  
(Antoine-Nicolas Dezallier d'Argenville)*

*«The gardens of Caserta are drawn and planted only in part, but they are at a fairly advanced stage for us to have an idea. Judging by the projects, they will be beautiful»  
(Saint-Non)*

*«The English gardens are nothing but a miniaturized union of the most beautiful paintings Nature has produced»  
(Bettini)*

*«More common sense in England, less order in France, less architecture in Italy,  
more verve in Holland, more sun in Russia, more trees in Hungary, more grass in Germany,  
more opulence in Switzerland, more taste everywhere»  
(De Ligne)*

*«Since I talked about paintings, why not take inspiration from them?  
There is a hundred of them which, if copies, would give life to the most beautiful English gardens in the world»  
(De Ligne)*

*«It would be nice to have an earthly paradise.  
The little that Moses tells us makes us understand that it was not planted by Le Nôtre*



*«You always have to resort to the lawn.  
I will never tire of recommending it and I recommend love on the lawn»  
(De Ligne)*

*«In Italy, I didn't see a single garden I liked. The palaces of the Italian lords are all peristyles  
and staircases and their gardens are only large uncultivated lands, devoid of taste and design»  
(De Ligne)*

*«I visited the Queen's Petit Trianon early in the morning. My God, what fascinating walk: the lilac-scented  
woods populated with nightingales were delicious. In my life, I have not spent more enchanting moments than  
the three hours spent in this retreat»  
(Henriette-Louise de Waldner de Freundstein, Baroness of Oberkirch,  
Lady of Honor of the Countess of the North)*

*«We French far surpassed the Italians in the art of gardens, which we also learned from them. In this genre,  
the Tuileries are what St. Peter is for architecture»  
(De Brosse)*

*«It almost seems that Italians don't care about gardening and cleaning;  
they don't have to spend much on gardeners.  
You should be really evil thinking that they do it to save»  
(De Brosse)*

*«What makes traveling pleasant is that even the usual things,  
thanks to novelty and surprise, acquire the flavor of an adventure»  
(Goethe)*

*«My main occupation is to design landscapes:  
here, sky and earth invite me to make it possible like in no other place»  
(Goethe)*

*«Traveling for me is a great source of happiness.  
Travels are for me like good music, making me enjoy the beauties of nature»  
(Stendhal)*

*«The Roman countryside, crossed by those long fragments of aqueducts,  
is for me the most sublime of tragedies»  
(Stendhal)*

*«I have traveled thirty miles for nothing.  
Caserta is nothing but a military barrack in an ungrateful position, like that of Versailles»  
(Stendhal)*

*«In Rome, you can enjoy the view of the city from a dozen points of view and have a different villa for each day  
of the week, and there are many more, with their views, their sounds, smells and memories, than you can  
perceive with your senses.  
But among all, my favorite is Villa Borghese»  
(H. James)*

*«The traveler who returns from Italy, with his eyes and imagination filled with the ineffable magic  
of the Italian garden, knows that he has been bewitched»  
(E. Wharton)*

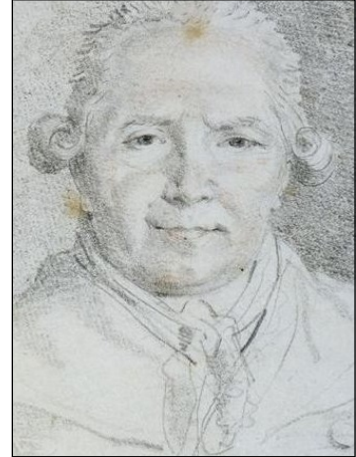




**Michel de Montaigne**



**André Le Nôtre**



**Jean-Honoré Fragonard**



**The Count and Countess of the North**



**Fredrik Magnus Piper**



**Hubert Robert**



**William Chambers**





**Francesco Bettini**



**Carmontelle**



**The Prince de Ligne**



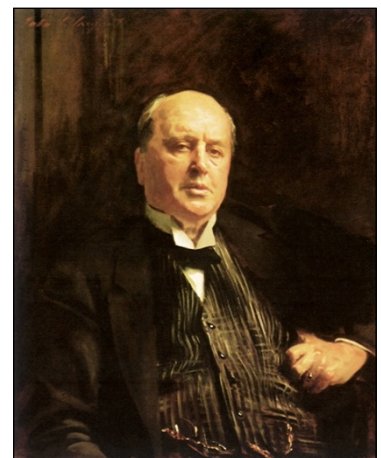
**Johann Wolfgang von Goethe**



**Charles de Brosses**



**Stendhal**



**Henry James**



***A Journey in the Gardens of Europe***  
*From Le Nôtre to Henry James*

---

5 July - 20 October  
Reggia di Venaria - Rooms of the Arts

**INFORMATION**

**Tickets:**

Full ticket: **12 euros**

Discounted: **10 euros** *Groups of at least 12 people, over 65, other categories eligible for discounts*

Discounted: **6 euros** *Young visitors aged 6 to 20 and University students under 26*

Schools: **3 euros per student** *Groups of at least 12 students, free admission for 2 adults every 27 students*

**Free:** Children under the age of 6 and other categories eligible for **free admission**

Admission is also included in the ticket **Tutto in una Reggia: 25 euros** (includes a visit to the Royal Palace, the Gardens and current exhibitions)

or, in the context of other events and special openings, such as **Summer Nights at the Reggia: 18 euros**

**Booking fee** on the purchase of admission tickets for **groups** (minimum 12, maximum 28 people):  
14 Euro per group - 5 Euro per class

The ticket is available at the ticket offices of the Reggia.

**For information and reservation:** tel. + 39 011 4992333 – [www.lavenaria.it](http://www.lavenaria.it)



Twelve years after their inauguration, **the 2019 schedule of events is dedicated to the Gardens.**

In the *Vivi i Giardini!* Program, in addition to the *Viaggio in Giardini d'Italia* exhibition, two extraordinary exhibition events stand out:

### **Anaphora**

**by Giuseppe Penone**

From July 5, 2019 in the lower Park of Reggia di Venaria

Exhibition accessible with all types of tickets.

Master **Giuseppe Penone** has completed his *Garden of Fluid Sculptures* with a new installation in the seven caves of the great Muro Castellamontiano.

Works have been installed within discreet spaces, like half-closed secrets; they can be admired by walking under the terraces, along the retaining wall and the caves follow one another along the brick wall that delimits the lower garden.

By giving this work the title of **Anafora**, from the Greek ἀναφορά, anaphorá, from aná, "again", and phéro, "I carry", the artist points to a repetition to emphasize a concept or a reality.

The seven caves in which the new marble works are placed accompany the visitors' walk. One after the other, the works are linked to the garden by an inscription. Each one of the seven sculptures comprises two blocks of Zebrino marble overlaid like row of books.

The inscriptions engraved on the marble can be read separately or in succession, as they form a short text: from the caves, they overlook the great works that make up the 2007 *Garden of Fluid Sculptures*, another creation by Giuseppe Penone, and testify, emphasize and repeat the contents

### **A Photographic Journey in the Gardens of the Savoy Royal Residences**

From 5 July to 20 October in the Gardens of Reggia di Venaria

The exhibition can be accessed with all types of tickets

The photographic exhibition entitled ***Viaggio fotografico nei Giardini delle Residenze Reali d'Europa*** presents a series of large-format photographs displayed outdoors in the Venaria gardens. They depict some aspects characterizing the gardens of some European residences: from Caserta to the Kremlin to Versailles, from the Godollo Royal Palace to the English Historic Royal Palaces, from Het Loo to Peterhof and Sanssouci in Potsdam. 120 shots depicting water features, architecture, sculptures, parterres, vegetable gardens and perspectives of the most beautiful gardens in Europe. The exhibition is itinerant: walking through the gardens, you can discover six sections, the hosting sites are the Fish Pond, the Vegetable Garden, the Rose Garden, the Gran Parterre and the tree-lined boulevard of Hercules. The photographs were collected through an official request submitted to ARRE residences, which participated in this initiative with enthusiasm and originality.





## Media contacts:

### RESIDENZE REALI SABAUDE PRESS OFFICE

---

Andrea Scaringella (Head)

Matteo Fagiano

---

ph. +39 011 4992300  
press@lavenariareale.it  
www.residenzereali.it  
www.lavenaria.it



#reggiadivenaria

lavenaria.it

 La Venaria Reale



RESIDENZE  
REALI  
SABAUDE